

**VILLAGE OF ANGEL FIRE**  
**Wildfire Protection Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**Monday, August 11, 2014 at 1:00pm at Village Hall**

**I. Call to Order**

Chairperson Rick Sprott called the meeting to order at 1:00

**II. Pledge of Allegiance**

The Pledge was called by Chairperson Rick Sprott

**III. Roll Call**

Voting committee members: Present- Mark Rivera, David Hartson, Scott Jones, Dan Rakes, and Rick Sprott. Excused-Mike Clemmons and John Goodson.

Non-voting members present: Mark McDonald (representing Andy Bertges), Jay Mitchell, and Burl Smith.

Council Liaison: Brinn Colenda. Other Councilors: Christie Girmscheid and Rogers Lanon. Notice of possible Council had been posted.

A Quorum of Voting Members was present.

Public attendees: Sam Lankford, Ken Smith, Don and Susan Clark, Pat McCarty, Claire Zegler, Stephen Crissman, Richard Sides, Jim Marlin, and Jeff Knapp.

**IV. Approval of Agenda**

Rakes moved to approve agenda, Hartson seconded, passed unanimously.

**V. Approval of Minutes**

Rivera moved to approve with correction, Hartson seconded, passed unanimously.

**VI. Old Business**

A) Public Input and Committee Education and Outreach (E&O)

1. Summary of input: Good compilation of input circulated.
2. Open House #2: Clemmons and Rivera organizing, continue to take input and get feedback on revisions, continuing education. May be delayed till September. Format and content based on Mayoral and Council guidance from the meetings on the 20<sup>th</sup> and Sept 9<sup>th</sup>.
3. Group Meetings: CoC (12<sup>th</sup>) [*Colenda, Sprott, Mitchell*], AAFPO (5:30 on the 12<sup>th</sup>), Rotary (Sept 17) Builders, Realtors #2?, others. Discussion determined another Realtor meeting would have significant value – Colenda and Borgeson to arrange.
4. Review other wildfire programs, defining defensible space, fuel reduction beyond defensible space, insurance issues.

B) Visit from Ruidoso Forester – Dick Cooke, Ruidoso Director of Forestry. It appears that Mr. Cooke will be available for our next open house, and to work with AFFD, Arnie Friedt, and Resort.

**VII. New Business – Tabled for future agenda**

A) August 4 Work Session Results –

1. Defensible Space considered important for homeowners (large number of attendees have already worked, large amount of experience present).
  2. Discussion around concern with 3D's (dead, diseased, and down trees) particularly on adjacent properties. Perhaps address using the nuisance ordinance, Title 9 Section 6. Rakes and Rivera to look at language to see if appropriate.
  3. Education before enforcement. Ecological standards not to be abridged by the ordinance.
  4. Contractor qualification, how and who clarified.
  5. Visitors supported voluntary effort rather than enforcement.
- B) Explaining ISO Rating System: Mark McDonald (ISOmitigation.com). ISO is primarily for structural fire fighting. Rewards for better ISO classifications are a) better funding for the Fire Department, and b) lower insurance rates for the community. Community ranked in 4 categories, a) emergency communications – 10 points, b) fire department- 50 points, c) Water Accessibility-40 points, d) community risk reduction - additional 5 points possible for fire investigation, fire mitigation, and community education. Total scores from 0 to 100 for a rating



of 1 to 10. VoAF has an ISO rating of 7. Ten is the lowest rating; 1 is best. Mark or Andy will bring back VoAF's detailed rating numbers in the next meeting. Hiring a forester or additional firefighter will not improve the ISO rating.

C) Committee Recommendation to Council Regarding 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading: Rivera proposes to the committee that:

1. "I move that the Wildfire Protection Committee sent an immediate recommendation to the Angel Fire Village Council that the second reading of the Fuel Modifications, Section 9-7-13 of the Village Code be withdrawn by Village Staff or Denied by Village Council." Rivera so moved, Rakes seconded, passed unanimously.
2. "I move that the Wildfire Protection Committee move forward on developing a new amendment to Section 9-7-13 of the Village Code that follows an outline as a starting framework which:
  1. Establishes two zones for fuel modification with radius to be determined by t his committee.
  2. That required treatments be limited to dealing with downed, dead, & diseased trees, Limbing trees, and the removal of ladder fuels and combustibles.
  3. That the required treatments be applied to lots with existing homes and to all new home construction and to lots adjacent to existing homes and all new home construction.
  4. That there be written explanations for the required treatments.
  5. That there be an emphasis on recommendations with explanations for additional fuel modifications.
  6. That the Village demonstrates adequate capacity to collect, process, and utilize slash created by these requirements and recommendations.
  7. That in Five Years time, a qualified forester conduct an assessment of the results of the required treatments and to advise / recommend additional code amendments to further reduce the risk of wildfires and to improve the quality of t he Village watersheds."

Rivera moved, Jones seconded, amended motion passed unanimously.

- D) Update on Home Insurance Issues: Lagasse. Analysis of a local insurance case reveals that a) insurance money for a total loss can be spent anywhere under most questions, b) insurance can be obtained from "surplus" market (high risk), c) insurance from regular companies was denied based on fire risk, d) insurance availability may be dependent based on property use – e.g., is the property to be rented. Committee observation: only a visit by qualified insurance broker to the committee could explain the factors, complications, and trends.

### **VIII. Questions from Audience Members**

1. Ken Smith: He is close to meeting the proposed requirements on his property. Objective of the committee should be driven by insurance considerations, structures vs. empty lots, or ISO ratings? Should we be focused on the overall forest and a big plan?
2. Jim Marlin: likes consensus but is worried about loss of momentum. Thinks the Committee is at a speed bump, and we need to push through for what is doable now. Meetings "start over" for new visitors, can we have a historical packet that covers what have we done, where we are at, what the references are, etc.
3. Jeff Knapp: Thinks a total risk analysis and determination of the big operational processes needing protection. Suggestions: clear the old logging roads for fire department access. Wants preventative measures, not mitigation measures. "What are the high value assets we want to protect?"
4. Susan Clark: Question on the process. If the Council withdraws the proposed ordinance, what happens to the grants for forester and the collection of slash? At last meeting, Council voted to go forward on grant (NMAC). Nuisance Ordinance can address 3D's. Answer: talking to Village Attorney to see if effective.
5. Rogers Lanon: NM League of Municipalities (NMLM) attorney says we need to repeal the old ordinance and replace it with a complete new piece of legislation. Feels we'll be open to litigation using our current course.

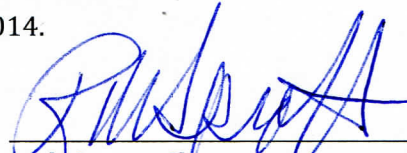
6. Christy Gernscheid: Wants us to aggressively pursue grants rather than stalling – specifically thinning grants. Wants us to share the NMLM lawyer's (Fleck) opinion. Discussion around the committee/staff concept of staging based on risk and timing – but it has legal difficulties regarding preferential application.
7. Pat McCarty: Recommends that the CWPP risk be worded in less explosive contexts.

**IX: Adjournment:**

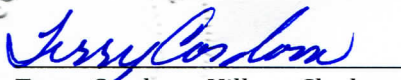
Jones moved to adjourn, Hartson seconds, passed unanimously. Adjourned at 3:24 PM.

Passed, Approved and Adopted on this 18<sup>th</sup> day of August 2014.

  
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Scott Jones, Secretary

  
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Rick Sprott, Chairman

ATTEST:

  
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Terry Cordova, Village Clerk

